

# EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY

Since 2010, state law (2009 Wisconsin Act 280) has explicitly allowed physicians, certified nurse prescribers, and physician assistants to prescribe or dispense antibiotics for chlamydia, gonorrhea and trichomoniasis for the sex partners of patients with those infections, without the clinician first examining the partner. The CDC strongly encourages this “**expedited partner therapy**” as a means of controlling infections in partners who are unable or unwilling to come to clinic for examination or testing.

## Benefits of EPT

Compared to conventional notification strategies, EPT:

- Reduces chlamydia infection prevalence by 20% at follow up
- Reduces gonorrhea infection prevalence by 50% at follow up
- Equals or increases rates of notification
- Increases confidence that partners had been treated
- Requires less clinic resources
- Is cost effective for patients

CDC. Expedited partner therapy in the management of STDs. 2006.

## Practicing EPT

- Attempt should be made to notify and refer partner for treatment. If this cannot be done, the following may be prescribed:

**CHLAMYDIA:** 1g Azithromycin  
**GONORRHEA:** 400mg Cefixime AND 1g Azithromycin  
**TRICHOMONIASIS:** 2g Metronidazole

- If unable to obtain patient name, write “EPT” or “EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY” under patient name on prescription
- Include EPT information sheet for partner

Act 280 protects health care professionals and pharmacists from civil and professional liability, except for willful and wanton misconduct.

## The importance of EPT

In Wisconsin, there are more bacterial sexually transmitted infections than all other reportable communicable diseases combined. Reinfection by untreated partners can account for 15-30% of these cases. Milwaukee has the second highest STI rate of the 50 largest cities in the United States. Within Milwaukee, these rates are over two times higher for people living in areas with low socioeconomic status. In addition, the rates for black adolescents 15-19 are 18 times higher than in white adolescents. The treatment for chlamydia and gonorrhea costs approximately \$30 and \$49, respectively, but complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease, bacteremia and infertility can cost thousands of dollars. Current conventional partner practices are limited and frequently insufficient in halting infection transmission. EPT is a treatment alternative to conventional methods that requires fewer resources and produces equal or better results leading to decreased rates of reinfection, thus reducing STI burden on the community.

**More information about EPT can be found at:**

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/communicable/STD/EPT/EPT.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/ept/>



Tom Barrett, Mayor  
Bevan K. Baker,  
Commissioner of Health  
[www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health)

PHARMACIST  
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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## IS EPT LEGAL?

Yes. On May 11, 2010, Governor Doyle signed into law *2009 Wisconsin Act 280*. This legislation enables pharmacists to dispense medication prescribed for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) to partners of patients diagnosed with trichomoniasis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia.

## WHEN IS A PARTNER ELIGIBLE FOR EPT?

The sexual partner(s) of a patient with a laboratory confirmed or suspected clinical diagnosis of trichomoniasis, gonorrhea or chlamydia infection, and who is unable or unlikely to seek timely clinical services. EPT should not be used with pregnant partners.

## WHAT MEDICATIONS MAY BE GIVEN FOR EPT?

Only antimicrobial drugs used to treat trichomoniasis, gonorrhea or chlamydia can be prescribed using EPT. The act explicitly excludes all controlled substances.

## HOW MANY EPT DOSES MAY BE GIVEN PER PATIENT?

EPT allows for the treatment of all a patient's partners. Treatment of all affected partners will reduce the risk of transmission and re-infection.

## HOW DO PHARMACISTS FILL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR EPT?

Pharmacists must meet requirements for the Pharmacy Examining Board for filling prescriptions. Prescriptions must also be labeled according to Wis Stat § 450.11(4) with the partner's name, if known, or the words Expedited Partner Therapy or EPT. Jane/John Doe may be entered into WEDSS as the patient's name as well as a fictitious date of birth.

## WHAT CONSULTATION MUST BE PROVIDED WITH EPT?

Pharmacists must provide consultation in accordance with the rules of the Pharmacy Examining Board. Additionally, the pharmacists must ask whether the partner is allergic to the prescribed medication and advise discontinuing the medication if the partner has a known allergy or develops signs of an allergic reaction after taking the medicine.

## ARE PHARMACISTS LIABLE IF ADVERSE EVENTS OCCUR?

Pharmacists are exempt from civil liability for injury to, or death of, the sexual partner unless an act or omission of the provider involves reckless, wanton, or intentional misconduct.

## HOW IS EPT DELIVERED?

Medication may be dispensed to the patient by the medical provider to take to his or her partner(s), or separate prescriptions may be written for the patient and his/her partner(s).

## WHO PAYS FOR EPT MEDICATION?

The index patient's insurance CANNOT be billed for the partner's EPT medication. The cost of EPT medication must be paid for by either the index patient, the partner out of pocket, or the partner's insurance in some instances (some insurance companies require a prescription be associated with a medical visit). There is no state or federal funding available for EPT.

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION STATEMENTS

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/EPTFinalReport2006.pdf>

AMA: [www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/471/ceja6.doc](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/471/ceja6.doc)

ACOG: [http://www.acog.org/from\\_home/publications/press\\_releases/nro8-22-11-2.cfm](http://www.acog.org/from_home/publications/press_releases/nro8-22-11-2.cfm)